

# Every Child Learning Every Day



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## READY TO LEARN

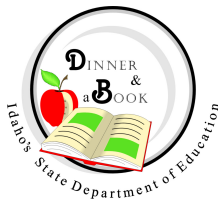
### Books connect kids to nature

By Dr. Stan Steiner

With spring well under way there are many great opportunities for outdoor learning from bike riding safety to counting flowers.

#### "A Crash Course for Molly,"

by Eva Eriksson, R&S Books, 2003/2005. The first two lines set the tone. Molly is big and smart. Now she can ride a bike. The rolling humor will connect with children learning to ride a bike for the first time. Molly eventually does learn to be safe through experience and a little bike riding lesson.



"Counting in the Garden," by Kim Parker, Orchard Books, Pre K-K. A good book to read before you stroll down the sidewalk or explore the backyard. Look for opportunities to turn the outing into a counting activity.

"Mi Libro Pequeño de Palabras: My Little Word Book," by Roger Priddy, 2005, St. Martin's Press. This bilingual board book is wonderful. The larger size is packed full of photos and vocabulary for everyday objects and places. Another nice feature is a pronunciation guide at the end of the book.

"Who: Baby Touch and Feel," by Robert Tainsh, 2005, St. Martin's Press. This neat touch and feel book includes animals out of the ordinary.

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## Summer is a great time for reading

Dear Reader:

Make the most of summer days by taking your child to a library. Studies show children are more likely to succeed in school when their parents are actively involved in their education and learning.

It is never too soon to begin reading to a child. Books are available for all levels of readers, from tactile books for infants to chapter books for older children. You can involve your child by asking questions such as "What do you think happens next?" or by following words with your finger or having your child point to pictures.

So many good children's books are available that choosing among them can seem overwhelming. A rule of thumb is to pick a variety of books and to



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look for stories you won't mind reading more than once. Most children will ask for a favorite story again and again, and this repetition

helps them learn about books and language. Your librarian can help find stories to interest both you and your child.

In this newsletter edition, you will find information about this summer's reading program and its exciting theme of "Dragons, Dreams and Daring Deeds." Libraries across Idaho will be participating, many of them offering toddler and baby activities as well as encouraging and supporting independent readers. Check with your library to find out how to get involved.

Time spent reading with your child is valuable in many ways. You will strengthen important reading and language skills and, just as important, build memories for years to come.

## READY TO LEARN

### Kids urged to 'joust' read this summer

The theme for Idaho's annual summer reading campaign in libraries is "Dragons, Dreams and Daring Deeds."

Make sure to sign up at your local library and check out some books, too! The National Parent Teacher Association offers these quick reading activities for younger kids.

1. **License to read.** On car trips, make it a game to point out and read license plates, billboards, and interesting road signs.

2. **Better than TV.** Swap evening TV for a good action story or tale of adventure.

3. **Look and listen.** Too tired to read aloud? Listen to a book on tape and turn the book's pages with your child.

4. **Labels, labels, labels.** Label things in your children's rooms as they learn to name them. Have fun while they learn



that written words are connected to everyday things.

5. **Pack a snack, pack a book.** Going someplace where there might be a long wait? Bring along a snack and a bag of favorite books.

6. **Recipe for reading.** The next time you cook with your children, read the recipe with them.

Step-by-step instructions, ingredients, and measurements are all part of words in print!

7. **Shop and read.** Notice and read signs and labels in the supermarket. Back home, putting away groceries is another great time for reading labels.

8. **Your long-distance lap.** Away on a business trip? Take a few books with you, call home, and have your child curl up by the phone for a good night story.

9. **A reading pocket.** Slip fun things to read into your pocket to bring home: a comic strip from the paper, a greeting card, or even a fortune cookie from lunch.

10. **A little longer?** When your child asks to stay up a little longer, say yes and make it a 15-minute family reading opportunity.



## RESOURCES

### Parents need to update child support info

Families with a child support order should contact the Idaho Child Support Program to update their address, phone number, name changes and bank account information to make sure they receive their payments.

Last year, almost \$157,000 in child support payments were sent to the State Tax Commission's unclaimed property division because of inaccurate personal or bank account information.

The Child Support Program collects and distributes money from parents the courts have ordered to pay child support.

With an additional 15 child support workers approved by the Idaho legislature for State Fiscal Year 2006, the Child Support Program will continue collecting more money for families each month.

If a family has not received a payment for several months, or even years, they are still encouraged to update their personal information as it may improve collections.

Last year, the Child Support Program collected and distributed more than \$152 million to Idaho families.

Parents are encouraged to contact the Idaho Child Support Program with any changes in address, names, home phone numbers and bank accounts. To update their information, families can call 1(800) 356-9868.

Parents may check their Quest Card balances either by phone or online at <http://www.idahoquestcard.com>. If overdue child support is collected and a parent has a valid Quest Card, payments are automatically deposited into the account.

If families have not kept the Child Support Program up-to-date with personal information, they also may want to check the Idaho State Tax Commission for unclaimed property online at <http://tax.idaho.gov>.

## NUTRITION

### Summer means fresh fruits, veggies & fun

Idaho's mountains, valleys, rivers and high desert foothills can offer many outdoor adventures and activities for your children and family. Sometimes long summer days can become a challenge for parents, as children might want to curl up on the sofa indoors rather than playing outdoors in the sunshine.

On some hot days, you and your children may enjoy walking to the river for a nice cool rafting



or canoeing trip. You can attend concerts at local parks or find a spot in the shade to play ball or throw a Frisbee.

Don't forget dancing. Dancing is a wonderful form of physical activity. Other fun outdoor activities include building a tree fort, horseback riding, biking and hiking.

You and your young children can visit a U-pick berry farm or orchard. Children love to pick fresh fruit. Pick enough to freeze and try frozen berries or fruit for a snack or fruit smoothie.

Gardening provides some light activity and vegetables to

pair with your fruit.

Why not get children in your neighborhood to form a club or group together and adopt a portion of a near-by highway or help pick up trash along a river or hiking trail? Children can learn about environmental awareness and get physical activity at the same time. It can be a great family outing.

For days when it is too hot to play outside, try going to the ice rink and go ice-skating, or walking in the mall or grocery store.

Bowling is also a good inside activity for those scorcher days of July and August.

## READY TO LEARN

### Learning about moms provides other lessons

An important concept children need to acquire early is that while people around them speak other languages, all languages share common phrases, such as words for mother, that they can learn to recognize.

#### Birth to 1 year

When you are with baby, practice saying the words "mama," "grandma," and other endearing phrases in your native tongue, using various pitches, both high and low, and speeds both slow and fast.

#### 1 to 3 years

Take your child to the zoo and point out all the different mother animals with babies, or use picture books to illustrate baby and mother animals.

Ask your child to identify the mother and then the baby animal and say the word "mama."

#### 3 to 5 years

Begin to help your child recognize mothers from different cultures. Visit the Internet to gain access to simple pronunciation to forms of the word mother from different languages: "madre,"

"amma," "mutter," "la mere."

#### Kindergarten skills

Experience languages other than English, based upon the ethnic composition of the community and the classroom.

#### Books and resources

"Mama Mama," by Jean Marzollo; "A Chair for My Mother," by Vera Williams, "Mama, Do You Love Me?" by P.D. Eastman, "The Runaway Bunny," by Margaret Wise Brown, and "The Mother's Day Mice," by Eve Bunting.

## SAFETY

### Kids, adults should take sun precautions

Dermatologists are alarmed by an epidemic of skin cancer in this country. This year more than one million Americans will be diagnosed with skin cancer. That's more than all other types of cancer combined.

Why are so many skin cancers occurring? Studies have shown that childhood sun damage, particularly sun burning, is strongly to blame.

Learning sun safety habits begins in the preschool years. Parents and early childhood service providers should be aware of the following guidelines and tips:

1. Whenever possible, out-

door activities should be scheduled before 10 a.m. and/or after 4 p.m. from March through October.

2. For all outdoor activities on sunny days, especially between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., encourage children and youth to:

a. Play in shaded areas  
b. Wear full-length clothing that includes:

(1) 4-inch or more wide-brimmed hats that create a shadow that completely covers the head, face, nose ears, and neck

(2) long-sleeved shirts and full-length pants made of tightly

woven fabric that is lightweight and light colored

c. Wear sunglasses that protect from 100 percent of UVA and UVB

d. 30 minutes before going outside, apply a SPF 15 or greater broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen to exposed skin

e. Use lip balm that has a SPF rating of at least 15

3. Parents should serve as good role models for children by practicing the safety strategies.

More information is available at [www.sunsafetyforkids.org/](http://www.sunsafetyforkids.org/)